

7 December 1981
MLD-1045

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS

FROM: Chief, London Bureau

THROUGH: Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT: Monthly Report -- London Bureau -- November 1981

I. GENERAL

- A. The B.B.C. External Services management team, headed by Managing Director D.T. Muggeridge, held one of its regular monthly meetings at Caversham on 17 November, visiting the ROSET site and receiving a briefing on the dish operation during their stay. The bureau chief and deputy chief attended the social functions laid on for the occasion. Earlier, on 5 November, in a visit arranged by the head of the Monitoring Service, a group of officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office was given an extensive briefing on the operation of the antenna and Moscow's television broadcasting system.
- B. The State Department's FSN job and wage classifiers finished the work and presented their report on 19 November. The position recommendations have been forwarded to Headquarters for evaluation. The wage survey recommended a new scale with increases averaging 10 percent for the most heavily occupied grades. A proposed reduction in shift disturbance pay that would have nullified the salary increase for most of our teletypists was countered by the Embassy after a resurvey sparked largely by the bureau's representations. The new proposal, if approved by the Department, will reflect local practice more accurately and be much more favorable to the shiftworkers involved.
- C. FBIS retirees [redacted] were presented their FBIS career medallions and letters from Director, FBIS at appropriate ceremonies during the month, the first at a lunch at the Bottle & Glass, the second at a dinner at the bureau chief's home.

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II. OPERATIONS

A. Editorial/Monitorial

1. The focus was on the USSR in November, beginning with coverage of Moscow's celebration of the 64th anniversary of the GOSR. The radio relayed the traditional military parade and the previous evening's Kremlin fete at which the main speech was given by Ustinov, the first defense minister to address the gathering during the Brezhnev era. Soviet television also carried the parade live, and for the first time the bureau was able to provide real-time monitoring by means of the ROSET antenna. Video recordings of the Red Square march-past as well as of TV newscast footage of the Kremlin ceremony were expedited to Headquarters via commercial airfreight.
2. A CPSU Central Committee plenum on the 16th heard a long speech by Brezhnev, which the bureau moved first over the dedicated circuit to facilitate its use by the Wire. The following day, Baybakov and Garbuzov spoke at a session of the Supreme Soviet, and the latter's statement about the defense budget was highlighted in an immediate FYI. Because of the high-level consumer interest in the Garbuzov and Baybakov speeches, PMU had a staff of four analysts and three editorial specialists on duty on Saturday, 21 November. The papers containing these speeches were received in PMU's Saturday morning mail and both speeches had been filed by 1700 that day, some 20,000 words in all.
3. The bureau provided a heavy file of reaction from East and West to President Reagan's foreign policy speech on negotiations with the Soviet Union. At Headquarters request, PMU prepared and filed six reports on West European reaction to the President's speech, including West German reaction liberally filed by the Cologne Unit.
- ✓ 4. The BBC's usual close watch on Soviet media resulted in the timely filing of a series of FYIs on the public appearances of Soviet leaders Brezhnev and Grishin, both of whom were rumored to be in ill health. Two requests from the Moscow embassy revealed its interest in Soviet television: The first requested a summary of a TV talk on alcoholism, the second "FBIS transcripts of Moscow's Studio Nine, International Panorama and International Affairs Roundtable programs."

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5. Brezhnev's visit to the FRG and another meeting of the embattled PZPR Central Committee generated a large volume of copy. BBC expanded its coverage of Moscow broadcasts in German and of other pertinent transmitters to ensure maximum reportage of the Brezhnev-Schmidt talks, and the bureau coordinated closely with Cologne Unit to avoid duplicate processing. Texts of the leaders' toasts at a dinner in Bonn on the 23d were refiled to USINF in Geneva and to the U.S. mission to NATO at the latter's request. Additional Polish monitors, an overnight shift and a second line to Vienna were laid on to handle the 2-day central committee session in Warsaw at which the party once again called on the government to adopt a hard line against strikes.
6. PMU resumed its normal Arabic coverage on 16 November, with Issa Soudah's return from extended annual leave.

B. Cologne Unit

1. At the Unit's request, [] provided video tapes of events related to Soviet leader Brezhnev's visit to Bonn 22-25 November as shown on West German television. The tapes were pouched to Headquarters. In a small first for the Unit, the TV monitor recently delivered [] by FBIS was used on the 23d to prepare an editorial report on the live relay of the official welcoming ceremony for Brezhnev. ST
2. At the request of the Bonn Embassy, London Bureau was asked to provide drop copies of Soviet-source items on Brezhnev's visit. The Embassy Political Section subsequently confirmed the usefulness of the items filed and expressed its gratitude for London's "outstanding" effort.
3. As a result of the growing strength of the mark against the dollar, a COL allowance was reinstated at the beginning of November.
4. Willie Ledgard, BBC Monitoring Service editor, visited the bureau on 30 November. ST

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C. Islamabad Unit

The Unit completed its surveys of Chinese regional stations, a project that lasted over one month.

D. Communications/Engineering

1. A team from the Autodin Switch paid an official visit on 18 November for a quality control check and general orientation. Results of the visit will be reported later.
2. The new Extel Model AH(P) receive only machines and B 405 reperfs have now been installed in the tape relay area. They replace the multiple teletype cabinets that are being transferred to Croughton together with a large supply of spare parts we no longer require.
3. The Inteq Mode I interface device has again been returned to Headquarters for reprogramming by the manufacturer. Thus we are still not in a position to relinquish our old Mode I circuit to Croughton.
4. The Moscow Embassy has at long last returned our video recorder.

III. ADMINISTRATION

- A. Junior Editor [] departed for Headquarters on PCS 30 November. ST
- B. PMU Arabic monitor [] transferred to the Nicosia Bureau on 21 November. Nicosia's [] reported for work at the PMU on 30 November. ST
- C. Teletypist [] resigned 25 November. A replacement has been selected and is in processing. ST
- D. [] EOD'd 30 November to fill a PMU position that had been vacant since 21 August. She brings with her Russian, French and Polish. ST

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IV. VISITS

To the Bureau: M/Sgt. Frank Warner, S/Sgt. Wayne Hight, and S/Sgt. Christopher Way, all from the Croughton Autodin Switch, 18 November.



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Attachments
cc: Chief, Austrian Bureau
Chief, Cologne Unit